

Not Alms But Legs

Acts 3 v 1-16

Context:

In a breathtaking move, after his death and resurrection, just before he ascended back to his Father in heaven, Jesus commissioned his flawed but faithful followers to continue his earthly mission. In fact, he instructed them, on the basis that all authority in heaven and on earth had been given to him, to take the Gospel of the Kingdom beyond the confines of Israel and the Jewish people, to the entire world, and to make disciples of all nations. In the Book of Acts, Luke tells the true story of how the disciples obeyed Jesus' command and it becomes clear, as you read Acts, that these new missionaries simply copied the evangelistic strategy they had seen Jesus employ – as they met people on their travels with their various needs, they did and said the kinds of things Jesus did and said. They shared the Gospel both in *words* and *deeds*. They both *declared* and *demonstrated* the life-changing power of the good news of the Kingdom of Jesus. In today's study we see one such example of this strategy in action.

Observation:

1. Who do we read about in v1, where were they going, when and why?
2. Who was being carried in v 2, where and why?
3. What did he ask of Peter and John in v 3?
4. How did Peter initially respond in v 4?
5. How did the man respond in v 5?
6. What did Peter say in v 6 and what did he then do in v 7a?
7. What was the effect on the man in v 7b-8?
8. What was the reaction of the people in v 9-10?
9. Where did the people gather in v 11?
10. How did Peter begin addressing the people in v 12?
11. How did Peter summarise the miracle in v 13a?
12. What accusations did Peter make in v 13b-15?
13. What explanation did Peter give for the miracle in v 16?

Meaning:

1. Even though Peter and John were now believers in Jesus, why do you think they were still attending the Temple (v 1)?
2. What do you imagine the lame man's life would have been like and how must he have felt every day (v 2)?
3. What do you think about Peter's model for healing the lame man – i.e. he invoked the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth; he *commanded* the man to walk (rather than *prayed* for him to walk); and he then helped the man to his feet and as he did so the man was healed (v 6-7)? Do you think this model was reserved for Jesus and his apostles or do you think this is how we should minister today?

4. What do you imagine the man was thinking and feeling in v 8?
5. Why do you think this miracle had such an impact on the people (v 9-11)? Do such miracles happen today?
6. Peter is careful to deny any personal credit for this miracle (v 12). Why is this important and what can we learn from Peter's example for our own life and ministry?
7. Why do you think Peter used the specific title for God in v 13? What impact might that have had on the crowd?
8. In what sense had this miracle glorified Jesus (v 13a)?
9. Why do you think Peter made the allegations in v 13b-15? Is there a place for this kind of 'hard' preaching in our evangelism today?
10. Peter mentions the importance of faith in Jesus in v 16. However, Luke never mentions any faith on the lame man's part (see v 3-5). So, whose faith is Peter referring to in v 16 and why is faith in Jesus critical for healing and salvation?

Application:

1. To what extent should Peter's model of evangelism be ours today?
2. How might meeting a person's physical/material needs, either by miraculous or natural means, be a door to then sharing the Gospel about Jesus?
3. To what extent should we share the Gospel in a way that includes the *hard* words as well as the *good* words, and how can we do this effectively?

Pray:

- Thank God for his healing power through Jesus.
- Pray for grace to share the Gospel in word and deed.